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Abstract

One stays awake longer than the Other. One listens to the late night talk show, the novelist babbling on

Keywords

poem, one, other, tinnitus



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Every Night

by Lois Harrod

One stays awake longer than the Other. One listens
to the late night talk show, the novelist babbling on

about her ten-year writer's block or the epidemiologist
blabbing plague. Or One listens to a book on tape,

adventures in Lower Egypt or Nevada, drownings and
drinkings. Something dumb because the Other

doesn't want to listen to anything smart, because
the Other has tinnitus and needs noise to displace

the ringing, and One fears One will have it too,
too much noise in her sleep. Even so One

listens for the breathing and the snores and the coughs
because the Other smoked too long and is still coughing

and sometimes One wakes and bends to the Other,
like a nurse in a nursing home checking a patient's hush,

those gaps, regular snores and then

nothing,

then the snore again,

it's those silences too One hates, wondering
what is stalking the heart's blubber,

what will steal the Other, what still
will give, what still can take.

Lois Marie Harrod's Cosmogony won the 2010 Flyway Hazel Lipa Chapbook contest (Iowa State University) and her Furniture won the 2008 Grayson Press Poetry Prize. Brief Term, poems from 22 years of high school teaching, is forthcoming from Black Buzzard Press in November. Earlier books include Firmament, Put Your Sorry Side Out, Spelling the World Backwards, This Is a Story You Already Know, Part of the Deeper Sea, Every Twinge a Verdict, Crazy Alice and Green Snake Riding. She teaches Creative Writing and supervises student teachers part-time at The College of New Jersey.

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